

Outline of Asian Federation of Middle East Studies Associations

Short History

AFMA was founded at Seoul in October 1995 by the three associations listed below, to promote Middle East studies in Asia by strengthening cooperation and contact among the member associations. The First Conference was held at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies in Seoul on October 21, 1995, and representatives of founding associations (Professor Ui-Sup SHIM of KAMES, ZHAO Ghuzhong of CAMES, and Professor ITAGAKI Yuzo of JAMES), signed the founding declaration there after agreeing to the General Rules and electing the Directors.

AFMA has had a regular conference every two years since 1995, and its President is elected and a location for the Secretariat chosen for two-year term. In addition to regular activities, individual exchanges and contacts occur as members of the three associations visit and participate in the annual meetings of each other's associations (KAMES annual meeting in October, JAMES annual meeting in May) and contribute papers to the journals of the associations and other institutes.

At the 4th Conference at Beijing in August 2002, when AFMA presidential and office duties had gone once around the member associations, the AFMA committee decided on the direction for a new phase of AFMA: the founding associations should give information about AFMA activities to the world, especially to East Asian countries, in order to make broader and stronger networks among East Asian institutions and scholars for Middle East studies. In October 2003, Mongolian Association of Middle East Studies officially joined AFMA.

From 2005, JAMES holds the presidential and office duties of AFMA, and its president is MIURA Toru, the president of JAMES.

Member Associations:

Chinese Association for Middle East Studies (CAMES)

Japan Association for Middle East Studies (JAMES)

Korean Association of Middle East Studies (KAMES)

Mongolian Association of Middle East Studies (MAMES)



The New President of AFMA

The 21st Annual Conference of JAMES (Japan Association for Middle East Studies) was held in the National Museum of Ethnology, Suita, Osaka on May 14-15, 2005. In the general meeting, the new

Board of Directors was announced, under the new presidency of Prof. MIURA Toru, Ochanomizu University. Prof. Miura will act as a president of AFMA until 2006.

AFMA President's Address

The rising of Middle East studies in East Asia has now attracted the attention of the World. The members of AFMA have participated in international conferences such as WOCMES in Mainz (2002), and the MELA (Middle East Librarians Association) held in the special session "The View from the East: Middle East Library Collections in East, South, and Australasia" at the MESA annual meeting in 2003.

AFMA's activities have now reached the 2nd stage, ending the first rotation of the presidency among KAMES, CAMES and JAMES. At the AFMA Council Meeting at Pusan in 2004, the membership of MAMES was approved, and MAMES will have the next presidency after JAMES.

The 6th AFMA Conference will be held in Tokyo in May 2006 on the theme of "Middle East Perspectives from East Asia." The relations between the Middle East and East Asia have a long tradition from early times, and are becoming stronger and more complex in the fields of politics, economics and culture. Middle East Studies has often been separated from Asian Studies in Europe, USA and East Asia, as well in terms of research organization. However, we can now find new approaches to Middle East Studies by discussing past and present relations between the Middle East and East Asia from comparative viewpoints. We look forward to your participation in the development of Middle East and Islamic Studies at this turning point in the globalization of world societies.

MIURA Toru, President of JAMES and AFMA
Professor of Ochanomizu University (Tokyo).